

DARDANELLE AND RUSSELVILLE

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Arkansas Delta Valley & Southern Railroader



COTTON PLANT-FARGO RAILWAY

WARREN & SALINE RIVER

LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Amtrak

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PRESIDENT.....WALTER WAIKER
 SECRETARY.....ROSS HOLT
 TREASURER.....C. R. HYRD
 NRHS DIRECTOR.....GENE HULL
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SEPTEMBER MEETING

After a long hot summer we will get back in the swing again at our September Swap meeting. The date is Sept. 12th at the MOP Office Bldg. 1000 West 4th St., North Little Rock starting at 2:00 PM. A good attendance is expected to start us off for another year. Bring your "Goodies".

NEW ZIP CODE

Effective July 1st the zip code number for our P.O. Box at the Brady sub-station was changed from 72205 to 72215. This number should be used on all future mail sent to our P.O. Box

OUR JULY PICNIC

Our picnic held at Scott, Ark. on July 24th was super deluxe in every way. Our thanks go to Chairman Fred Fillers and his committee as well as to Bob Dortch and his Scott & Bearskin crew. They really went all out for us with special runs and featuring a steam triple header on the last inbound run of the day. Only thing disappointing was the attendance.

JULY PICNIC CONTINUED

It was one of those scorching hot days but hot days and picnics go together like hot dogs and mustard. Hope we can show an improvement in 1977.

THE READER RAILROAD

For the information of some of you who may not know it; READER R.R. Locomotives have been sold as follows: No. 1702 to Saudi Arabia; No. 108 to the Conway Scenic, Conway, New Hampshire; and No. 11 to the Bureka Springs R.R., Beaver, Ark. Also, we are indebted to our friends with the NRHS News at Oak Park, Illinois to the effect that No. 108 while enroute from Reader to North Conway, N.H. was broken into and among the many items stolen were the builder plates, the number plate, the bell, the whistle, the headlight and the classification lamps. This editor is unable to put in print just what he thinks of engine thieves. Its a sad commentary on the times we live in. While on the subject, and which is the editor's opinion, the State of Arkansas really did pull a "boo boo" when they did not purchase the original Reader R.R. and use it for tourist purposes. The Reader, without a doubt, was the best known common carrier-tourist hauler in the nation. It not only starred in a couple of movies but was sound recorded by a well known West Coast sound recording company.

READER R.R. CONTINUED

The recordings of this company are now best sellers. At least one of the engines, No. 11, will remain in the state. Conway, N.H. and Saudi Arabia's gain is our loss.

EUREKA SPRINGS R.R.

Your editor recently received a note from Reat Younger of the Eureka Springs R.R. They are making progress and they welcome all volunteer help they can get. The date of operation is unknown at this time but when the line is operable it will give the State of Arkansas a third tourist hauler. The more the better.

EX-SP-4449

The Southern Railway is featuring two super deluxe tourist runs with Ex-SP-4449. One will be on August 26th and will run from Birmingham, Ala. to Atlanta, Ga. The other will run from Atlanta to Alexandria, Va. in two parts, leaving Atlanta on August 28th, tying up for night at Salisbury, N.C. and running from that point on to Alexandria on August 29th. The equipment will be the heavyweights run behind 4501, 630, etc. These two trips must certainly be the highlight of steam excursion trips for 1976. Have heard of another one in the making, (not confirmed) from Miami, Florida at the conclusion of AFT trip, to the West Coast. If materializes this would of course be the trip taking No. 4449 back to home base. There is a possibility also, that this trip might route via Memphis, (also not confirmed). This trip would also be one of those "Once In A Lifetime" trips. Lets hope it materializes.

EX- ICG BUSINESS CAR

ICG Business Car No. 50 which is painted in AMTRAK colors, was delivered to SSW by MP in North Little Rock on July 8th and was taken to Scott, Ark. where it is now on property of

ICG BUSINESS CAR CONTINUED

the Scott & Bearskin Lake R.R. This car is owned by an individual and car will be renovated and re-sold. It suffered a fire in the galley; otherwise it is in perfect condition. Understand the car at one time was used by the President of the GMEO. A very beautiful car; if you have not seen it go to Scott first opportunity and look it over.

GENERAL NEWS

The Midyear issue of the SOUTHERN PACIFIC BULLETIN contains a good color article on the "Johnny Cash Special" on the COTTON BELT on March 20th, this year. There is also another good color picture of SP switcher getting ready to couple onto a bulkhead flatcar of lumber at Noti, Oregon. Noti surely brings to mind that place where lots of rail "goodies" originate. Railfans the country over know about Noti.

Your editor had a chance to latch onto a copy of the Southern Pacific passenger timetable dated May 3, 1925 (Big and Fat). This timetable is surely representative of the golden age of passenger railroading. In addition to the many regular passenger trains of the S.P. it contains schedules of the vast Pacific Electric System as well as the Southern Pacific R.R. of Mexico., both P.E. and the S.P. Of Mexico were owned and operated by S.P. If you are nostalgic this timetable has just what you want.

Our friend Ernie Deane at Fayetteville, (former writer of Gazette column, "The Arkansas Traveler") reports that the loco atop Rich Mountain at Queen Wilhelmina State Park is rotting away and has been vandalized. He wrote to the Park s and Tourism Commission about its condition. Do not know at this time if anything has been done to restore it or not. The engine was formerly owned by Dierks Forests. Another shameful episode by thieves.

GENERAL NEWS CONTINUED

Tom Foster, 1510 Park Street, Malvern, Ark. 72104 sells copies of his book, "45 Years On The Rock Island Line", postpaid for \$3.25 per copy. Its a paperback and written in plain english. Front and back photos are by the late Charles Ost. Its well worth reading.

Several diesel locos of the Rock Island containing the new colors and lettered "The Rock" have been seen passing thru Little Rock and North Little Rock lately. Also seen recently passing thru Pine Bluff were cars formerly lettered Penn Central and now carrying letters "CON RAIL". Am sure we will be seeing a lot of CON RAIL equipment right along now.

A new movie, "The Texarkana killer" is partly being filmed on the Scott and Bearskin Lake R.R. at Scott, Ark. The train sequences are being filmed at Scott; other parts being filmed at Texarkana and other towns. Look for it when it is released, date unknown.

There is no doubt but that 1976 so far has been one of the greatest years for railroading in Arkansas and all of the rest of these United States as well. The visit of the American Freedom Train to North Little Rock was probably the highlight for our club since we had a part in helping with the arrangements for its visit here. Lets don't let down; keep on boosting the railroads at every opportunity and try and make 1977 and all future years just as great as 1976. We all know what the rails do for our great nation, past and present. Our duty is to help make others know about it. The future holds great possibilities for our railroads. There will be many changes we are sure; mergers there will be which we hope will be for the better. We are all part of the greatest industry on the face of the earth. No other form of transportation can match the railroads at the present time nor is there any form in the foreseeable future that will match them.

GENERAL NEWS CONTINUED

Understand the Air line Industry has a new nickname "Baggage Smashers".

Did you know that North Little Rock at one time many years ago, had a terminal switching line known as the Argenta Terminal Railroad. This was when North Little Rock was known as Argenta and the line switched for the three North Little Rock lines.

The September issue of RAIL CLASSICS has quite an interesting article on the street car system that at one time operated in both Little Rock and North Little Rock. All street car and traction fans in our club will sure want to read this article. It brought back many memories to your editor who remembers the system well. The big event on Sunday afternoons back in the late twenties was to board one of the big open cars at 5th & Main in Little Rock and ride out to what was then known as "White City" where there was a big amusement park and swimming pool. When the car left Stiff Station there was nothing but woods from there on out to what is now the Heights Theatre. What a ride it was, the big cars made pretty good time and the conductor stood out on the running board of the car and collected the fares. I will never forget one of the motormen was named Frank Brewer; a very high class gentleman and courteous as they come. The system then was known as the Little Rock Railway and Electric Company. Brewer always wore a natty uniform and had a cap with a beautiful badge on it which read "Motorman, Little Rock Railway And Electric Company". Those were the days.

The last part of this newsletter contains an amateur writing effort on the part of your editor, so settle back in your parlor car seat and read away. If it bores you just drop your head and snooze away. This article is entitled, "Troop Train Escort".

TROOP TRAIN ESCORT

BY: W. A. (BILL) MERCK

During World War II in addition to my other duties in the Cotton Belt Traffic Department I acted as a troop train escort. The experience related below is more or less a common one and am sure was shared by other escorts. It is all from memory as I have no files or notes. It happened many years ago.

One particular trip stands out in my memory. I was called one summer day of either 1943 or 1944 to act as escort on an Army train that Cotton Belt was to receive from the Frisco at Memphis. This train originated at some camp in either South Carolina or North Carolina and was routed via the old ACL to Birmingham-FRISCO to Memphis thence SSW-SP. We were to get this train from Frisco at about 8:30 PM that night; instead we received it about 3:30 AM the next morning. The Frisco switcher brought the train to Cotton Belt, caboose and power coupled on and we were ready to get under way. The caboose, I recall had the big Cotton Belt emblem on the sides. The train consisted of some 15 or 16 heavyweight Pullmans and two kitchen cars. At 3:30 AM there was no one up except the crew in the caboose and yours truly. Upon leaving Memphis I went back to the caboose and shot the breeze with the crew. The escort always had to get the tickets from the train commander and he, as well as all the men were asleep at that time in the morning. Old Sol was creeping up in the sky when we reached Brinkley and the Op was standing by the main line with some orders for the front and rear ends. We rolled thru Brinkley and about five miles out went into a siding for a CTC meet. When we stopped I got down on the ground from one of the Pullmans and waited. I saw a headlight coming from the south and I knew he was coming fast. He passed me at about 65 and it was Lone Star No. 2 enroute to Memphis. The hogger waved to me as he went by and the consist was the usual head end traffic plus chair cars and two Pullmans; the rear one being the thru Shreveport-Memphis combination sleeper-parlor-observation. The tail sign was still burning which read "Cotton Belt Lone Star". On down the track I could hear him whistling for the station stop at Brinkley. He was right on the advertised. At about this time our train started moving out of the siding onto the main line. We started to roll fast and did not make any more stops until reaching Pine Bluff. Between Brinkley and Pine Bluff I went to the kitchen car and got breakfast which consisted of (as I remember) scrambled eggs, bacon, toast and coffee. It tasted mighty good especially since I had been up all night. The men were now getting up and I went to the train commander's drawing room and introduced myself and we chatted awhile and he gave me the tickets. These train commanders were usually high ranking officers; believe this gentleman was a Colonel. He was very fine and he appreciated me offering he and his men the services of the railroad. Incidentally the escort wore "several hats". He not only handled the tickets but acted as a good will ambassador for his railroad, a messenger, etc. I got my reports made before reaching Pine Bluff. These reports were rather lengthy and consisted of getting origin, destination, number of men, etc. on each ticket; also the names and numbers of each car in the train. The tickets always had to jibe with the exact number of men on the train; if they didn't you had to make a head to head count; man if you think that is not a job try counting heads on 15 Pullmans. To go on with my story, I finished my reports, got the SSW portions of the tickets and took ~~them~~ back to the train commander and got his signature on my reports. the other tickets/

We rolled into Pine Bluff and stopped down by the yard office and superintendent's office. At this time the Cotton Belt's electronic hump yard at Pine Bluff had not been completed. At the yard office was a long concrete run way and many of the men got off the train for a bit of exercise. The power and caboose were changed. The new power was one of the famous Cotton Belt 800 class engines; these engines could be used in both freight and passenger trains; they were primarily used for heavy freight service. The men got back on the train; the hogger got the highball and we moved on out of Pine Bluff and really started to roll. We made only one stop between Pine Bluff and Texarkana which was another CTC meet which as I recall was somewhere in the vicinity of Lewisville or Stamps, Ark. At Texarkana the caboose was changed again but not the power. The big 800 stayed with us and really hit her stride on the Cotton Belt's Texas Division. It was real treat to stand in the vestibule and look out and see the 800 taking the curves and hearing the beautiful whistle and seeing the oil smoke pouring out of the stack. My orders were to detrain at Tyler, Texas and I was in that city for only a short while and then took a regular scheduled Cotton Belt passenger train to Mt. Pleasant, Texas where I changed to Lone Star No. 2 out of Dallas. The two mains of the Cotton Belt split at Mt. Pleasant, one going to Dallas and Ft. Worth, the other to Tyler, Corsicana and Waco. Upon arriving Texarkana I made connection with Missouri Pacific train to Little Rock.

This is just one of many experiences I had while acting as an escort. All of the trains I escorted were either Army or Marine. Some of the boys escorted Navy trains and some escorted WAC and WAVE trains. They told me it was quite an experience on the Wac and Wave trains. I was never lucky enough to get one of these.

-----THE END-----

The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization that meets the second Sunday of each month in the Missouri Pacific Office Building, 1000 West 4th St. North Little Rock, Ark. For information about the club write P. O. Box 5584, Little Rock, Ark. 72215.

The news letter was about ready for mailing when some last minute news was received which is shown below:

AMTRAK

Information has been received and confirmed that the INTER-AMERICAN will be changed to a daily basis effective October 31st. The train will be a thru Chicago-Ft. Worth run. Officials are studying two schedules for the train at the present time but we cannot report a firm schedule at this time. Understand one schedule has the northbound leaving Little Rock around 8:00 PM with arrival Chicago next AM. We will report further on this when additional information is received.

MUSEUM SALES COMMITTEE

Our Museum Sales Committee which is as you know headed by our Naomi Hull, will have some surprises in store for us at our September swap meeting. Naomi will have some paintings of the Freedom Train which are ready to hang. Also there will be some of the new NRHS pins and patches. Other "Goodies" you will see at the meeting. Naomi does a wonderful job with the committee with limited funds. Congratulations again Naomi.

ATTENTION: PENN CENTRAL HOBBYISTS

If any of you like to collect Penn Central souvenirs and artifacts now is the time to try and get them. Since take over by CONRAIL understand P.C. articles are going like "Hot Cakes". This may also apply to other roads taken over by CONRAIL; Lehigh Valley, E.L. C.R.R. of N.J. etc.

1976 STEAM PASSENGER SERVICE DIRECTORY

All members interested in the steam, diesel and electric tourist lines in our nation, (and who isn't) should purchase a copy of the 1976 Steam Passenger Service Directory. It retails for \$2.50 per copy and is published by Empire State Railway Museum, Inc., Middletown, New York. Although there are some lines not included in the directory, most of them are and if you like to travel and explore the various lines this directory is a must for you. Front cover shows American Freedom Train powered by Ex-Texas & Pacific No. 610. Rear cover shows the same train powered by Ex-Southern Pacific No. 4449. Both photographs are very beautiful and the directory is well worth the price. Local fans can obtain a copy at the depot of the Scott & Bearskin Ry. at Scott, Ark.

THANKS FROM EDITOR

Wish to thank all of you for the wonderful cooperation you are giving me in preparing your newsletter. I welcome all the news you can give me and will be glad to run any articles you hand in to me provided they are not too lengthy and space is available. We have had articles from Gene Hull, Mike Adams, Bill Bailey. Any of you literary bugs that think you can write a rail article please do so. It doesn't have to be written like a Damon Runyan, etc. Just write it;period.
